{CLEAN PAGES OF THE AMENDED SPECIFICATION}

computer terminals CT1-CTn are represented. The indicated

terminals T1-Tn represent the multitude of telephone terminals

existing in association with the public switched telephone

network (PSTN). The indicated computer terminals CT1-CTn

5   represent the multitude of computer terminals connected to the

Internet.

The PSTN, which accommodates the individual terminals T1-Tn,

is coupled to an Interactive Voice Response System (IVR). The

Internet, which accommodates individual computer terminals CT1-

10   CTn, is coupled to an Internet Web Server (IWS). Individual

telephone callers use the individual telephone stations T1

through Tn to interface the IVR through the PSTN. Individual

users at computer terminals CT1 through CTn use the Internet to

interface the IWS. Both telephone callers and Internet users may

15   record digital audio messages that can be listened to from any of

the remote telephone terminals T1-Tn or from any of the remote

computer terminals CT1-CTn. Internet users may leave digital

text messages that may be accessed from any of the remote

telephone terminals T1-Tn using text to speech or from the remote

20   computer terminals CT1-CTn via computer monitor.

First, considering the system of **Fig. 1** in somewhat greater

detail, it is to be understood that the PSTN has multiplexing

capability for individually coupling the terminals T1-Tn to the

IVR on request. In the illustrative embodiment of the system,

11

the individual terminals T1-Tn take the form of existing

traditional or conventional telephone instruments. It is also to

be understood that the Internet has the capability for

individually connecting the computer terminals CT1-CTn to the

5   IWS. In this illustrative embodiment of the system, the

individual computer terminals CT1-CTn take the form of personal

computers that comprise a central processing unit (CPU), modem,

monitor, keyboard, hard drive, sound card, speakers and

microphone. A certain number of CT1-CTn would also include a

10   video capture card and a camera. In addition, the invention

assumes that one or more of the individual computer terminals

CT1-CTn is running Internet telephony client software,

commercially available examples of which are Microsoft NetMeeting

and Intel Internet Phone. To allow video conferencing, a given

15   computer terminal would be loaded with Internet communication

software that supports video, such ad Microsoft NetMeeting 2.0.

      Second, considering the IVR in somewhat greater detail, the

PSTN is coupled to an IVR (see **Fig. 1**). In the disclosed

embodiment, from the PSTN, forty-eight lines are connected to the

20   IVR from the PSTN and, accordingly, the IVR may accommodate up to

forty-eight simultaneous calls from the PSTN. The IVR contains a

processor, an exemplary form of which is an Intel 166MHz Pentium

Processor. The forty-eight lines from the PSTN are connected to

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the processor though an interface 15, an exemplary form of which

is a series of commercially available Dialogic (D240SC-T1) cards.

The interface incorporates modems, tone decoders, switching

mechanisms, DNIS and ANI capability. The Dialogic card stores

5   audio information in the Dialogic .VOX format.

Generally, DNIS capability is a function of the PSTN to

provide digital data indicating the called number. ANI

capability is a similar function whereby the digital data

indicates the calling number.

10   Considering the IWS in somewhat greater detail, the IWS is

coupled to the Internet via a T3 line to a local Internet

provider service. The IWS may accommodate a multitude of

simultaneous Internet users. As represented, the IWS is a micro

computer programmed for Internet information server operations.

15   The IWS contains a processor and Internet server software,

exemplary forms of which are an Intel 166Mhz Pentium Processor

and Microsoft Internet Information Server software.

The IWS is also loaded with RealAudio Server software from

Progressive Network. RealAudio allows a Microsoft Windows .WAV

20   file to be converted into a RealAudio .RA file, a compressed

format that allows playback over the Internet in real time, as

opposed to first downloading a file and then listening to it.

RealAudio accomplishes this by playing an audio file while it is

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PLACING AN AD THROUGH A TELEPHONE

    An exemplary operation of the system, with regard to a
specific telephone caller placing a personal advertisement will

5   now be treated to accomplish the process as indicated in **Fig 5**.
First, suppose a telephone caller at terminal T1 makes a call to
place a personal advertisement in response to an advertisement in
XYZ newspaper. The assumed call involves the telephone caller
actuating the buttons to input the number 1-8-0-0-5-5-5-3-3-3-3,

10   for example. As a result, signals are provided to the PSTN
resulting in a connection from the remote terminal T1 to the IVR.
Using standard DNIS techniques, the IVR associates the called
number 1-8-0-0-5-5-5-3-3-3-3 with a specific format, for example,
a voice personals ad taking format.

15   The caller is first prompted to create a profile of himself
by answering a series of questions using the buttons on his touch
tone phone. Referring initially to **Fig 5**, upon receiving a call,
the IVR cues the caller to enter his telephone number 801. The
IVR stores the telephone number 802 in the field AD_PHONE 203.

20   Next, the IVR asks the caller if he would like to enable the
direct connect feature, thereby allowing respondents to be able
to call the advertiser's telephone number, without revealing the
number 803. For example: "If you would like to activate the

17

advertiser retrieving responses to his personal ad will now be treated to accomplish the process as indicated in **Fig. 13**. First, suppose an advertiser at terminal T1 places a call to retrieve messages left in response to his ad. The assumed call

5   involves the advertiser actuating the buttons to input the number 1-9-0-0-7-7-7-4-4-4, for example. As a result, signals are provided to the PSTN resulting in a connection from the remote terminal T1 to the IVR. Using standard DNIS techniques, the IVR associates the called number 1-9-0-0-7-7-7-4-4-4 with a

10   specific format, for example, a message retrieval format.

Referring to **Fig. 13**, upon receiving a call, the IVR sets the "logon attempts" equal to zero 2501. The IVR then increments the "logon attempts" by one 2502 and cues the caller for a mailbox number 2503 and password 2504. The IVR then queries the

15   Ad Database to determine if the mailbox number and password are valid 2505. If the entries are not valid, the IVR determines if the caller has exceeded the maximum number of logon attempts allowed 2506. If the caller has exceeded the maximum number of logon attempts allowed, the call is terminated 2507. If the

20   maximum number of logon attempts allowed has not been exceeded, the IVR increments the "logon attempts" by one 2502 and again cues the caller for a mailbox number 2503 and password 2504.

If the entries are valid, the IVR then queries the

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{MARKED-UP PAGES OF THE AMENDED SPECIFICATION}

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accommodate up to forty-eight simultaneous calls from the PSTN

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the PSTN [PTN] are connected to the processor though an interface

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to provide digital data indicating the called number. ANI
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First, suppose an advertiser at terminal T1 places a call to

retrieve messages left in response to his ad.   The assumed call

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